THE MANCAPURI CAVE

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The Mañcapuri Cave: This cave of the second-first century B.C., in Khaṇḍagiri-Udayagiri, near Bhuvaneshwar, Orissa is very important for our study of the history of Kaliṅga in general and of Jainism in particular in the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C. The main part of it was put up by Kudepasiri and the rest by Kumāra Vaḍukha. The inscription in this cave reads as—

"Airasa mahārājasa Kaliṅgādhipatino mahā—vāha—
Kudepasirino leṇaṁ/
kumāro Vaḍukhasa leṇaṁ"

Probably Kudepasiri was Khāravela's successor and Vaḍukha, the successor of Kudepasiri. The truth seems to be that these *leṇas* were erected for the persons mentioned in pursuance of the *saṁpradāya* for kings to take to *muni-vṛtti* (*vārdhakye munivṛttīnām*) so common in Jainism (so assures Prof. Upadhyaya of Kolhapur as is evident from the Jaina stories). Persepolitan and Scythian influences are noticeable in this cave in the carvings of gate-keepers, pillar-brackets revealing fully clad cavaliers on caprisoned horses wearing like *Kirātas* undergarments of leaf patterns. (*cf.* the soldiers in the Gaṇésa-guṁphā also in Udayagiri). Other features worth noting in this cave are the design of railing of the Bodh-Gayā pattern and entablature of *śālā* pattern interspaced by *toraṇas* revealing rafters as in Lomasa-ṛṣi cave, Barabar Hills, Bihar. There are *Tri-ratna* designs over the arched entrances to the *leṇas* which are double voluted. Persepolitan pilasters support the *śālā* entablature. Among the bracket figures women holding *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* and with heavy *keśa-bandha*, secured by garlands occur. The brackets are cut out.

The most important scene which arrests our attention in this cave is the central scene on the façade of the verandah (plate I). Though

unfortunately mutilated what remains shows a throne with a royal group on the proper left consisting of two men and two women. The first man near the throne is badly mutilated. He is probably the king, by virtue of his proximity to the throne. Behind him stands another royal figure with a tiara resembling the tiara on Mauryan heads found at Sārnāth[1]. Let us call him the prince. Behind the prince stand two women of equal status. The first may be taken to be the queen, the next as the princess. Above the king and the prince are two *gandharvas* hovering in the sky and beating a drum suspended on a pole (*cf.* Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa). It is not the bell as R. D. Banerji took it to be. Above the women adjoining the *gandharvas* there is a representation of a "full-blown" lotus which has been readily taken by all to represent Sūrya. While the attitude of the royal party is to adore whatever was kept on the throne, the flower and the *gandharvas* over the party bring out their importance. Shall we take the scene as one in which the king (perhaps Khāravela), prince (perhaps Kudepasiri) and the queen or princess are doing honour to the image of the Kaliṅga Jina which Khāravela recovered from Magadha and restored to his people[2]?

Another possible identification is with reference to the inscriptions actually found in this cave. The nearmost king may be Kudepasiri while behind him stands the Kumāra (heir-apparent—is he Vaḍukha?), in which case, the peculiar *tiara* can be taken to be a coronet.

Outside, or to speak correctly at the proper left end, we can note a

1 *ASI., AR.,* 1914-15—Excavations at Sārnāth, by H. Hargreaves, p. 111—Antiquities west of main shrine. I. *Maurya.*—fragment, 8″ high, of human figure, life size. [The face is entirely destroyed, but traces of the right eye remain. The ears are normal and well modelled. A mural crown of seven merlons, above a wreath of laurel, hides the hair save for a few short curls on the forehead. The head was apparently modelled in the round and is polished in the usual Maurya fashion. The statue, however, does not seem to have been intended to be visible on all sides, as five inches of the back are left unpolished. The stone is a fine speckled sandstone of a light grey colour, but the outer surface, where not concealed by a calcareous deposit, is of a blackish hue as though affected by fire which has also diminished its original polish. The lines of the figure are robust and life-like. Traces of drapery at the base of the neck. The top of the head and upper edges of merlons, which would be invisible when the statue was in position, are left unpolished, (pl. XVI, 4).

2 R. D. Banerji, *History of Orissa,* vol. I, pp. 81, 91.

Plate I.

Samavasaraṇa of a Tīrthaṅkara or reinstallation of the image of Kaliṅga-Jina; Mañcapuri Cave—2nd-1st century B.C.

vigorous elephant exhibiting eagerness to participate in the adoration (*cf.* Nalagiri in "the life of Buddha" for animal intelligence). Behind the elephant is a hovering *Vidyādhara* hurrying to the same scene with a tray of flowers and a *clenched hand* of determination, exhibiting the same eagerness as that of the elephant. We will not be wrong, if we assume that the entire scene is of the worship offered to the Jina in which human beings (King, prince and princesses), animals such as the biggest animal elephant (men and animals being shown on the terrestrial plane) and Devas and celestials such as *Vidyādharas*, *Gandharvas* and *Jyotiṣkas* or stellars (represented by a full-blown lotus which combines the designs of the stars in the seed-vessel, and in the next concentric circle the moons and Sūryas and the external row of big and small petals standing for the rest of the Jyotiṣka classes) participated. For better understanding of the scene certain details relating to Jaina iconography are summarised here. The classification of souls in Jainism is as follows: —

- Souls
  - Perfect (*Siddha*)
    - Sāmānya siddha
    - *Tīrthaṅkara siddha*
  - Mundane
    - Human (1)
      - Ascetic
        - Arhats
        - Ācāryas
        - Upādhyāyas
        - *Sādhus*
      - Non-Ascetic
        - Great
        - Ordinary
    - Subhuman (2)
    - Hellish (3)
    - Celestial (*Devas*) (4)
      - *Bhavanavāsi* (4)
      - *Vyantara* (4)
      - *Jyotiṣka* (4)
      - *Vaimānika* (4)

The *celestials or Devas* are of 4 orders :

1. *Bhavanavāsi-devas* who are in turn of ten classes. The 4th class is *Dvīpa-Kumāra* with an elephant cognizance. Does the elephant in the relief indicate him?

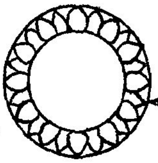
2. *Vyantara devas* are of 8 classes—*Kinnara, Kimpuruṣa, Uraga, Gandharva, Yakṣa, Rākṣasa, Bhūta,* and *Piśāca.* The fourth Vyantara class, *Gandharva,* is represented by the drum-playing couple hovering in the sky. *Hābā* and *Hūbū* are of the *Gandharva* class. Are the two here *Hābā* and *Hūbū*?

3. *Jyotiṣka-devas*: There are 5 classes of them—Suns, Moons, Planets, Constellations and Scattered stars. Their Indra is Sūrya and Prati-Indra is the Moon.

The wheel (*cakra*) which in Jaggayyapeṭa, Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa becomes the mark of a *Cakravartin,* and also stands for the Buddhist 'Wheel of the law', and elsewhere for the discus of Viṣṇu, originally represented the Sun. The lotus design in a line with the *Gandharvas* in the panel may indicate stellar symbolism with an arrangement as shown in the sketch below :—

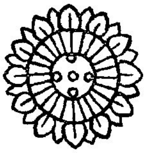
The seed-vessel contains 5 circular marks. The next circular part contains 24 ray-like strokes. The outer circumference of the flower contains 12 small and 12 big lotus petals.

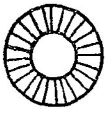
STELLARS 5



PETALS 24

STELLAR SYMBOLISM





RAYS 24

The stellars were invariably indicated by this lotus-design in Jaina painting[3]. Though the five marks within the seed-vessel may be sufficient symbolic representation to stand for the five stellar classes (Sun, Moon, Planets, Constellations, and Stars), the two outer rings (one of 24 rays and the other of 24 petals) are only to make the identification doubly sure. The 24 rays probably stand for the 12 *Rāśis* and 12 *Lagnas* (*cf.* the arrangement of the wheels at Konarak).

3 Cf. T. N. Ramachandran, *Tiruparuttikunṛam and its temples,* pl. XVI, (*Samavasaraṇa*) and pl. XIX, fig. 45.

The outer 24 petals probably indicate the same or stand for the Sūryas and Candras of Jainism. The marks within the seed-vessel perhaps stand for stars.

4. *Vaimānikas* constitute the 4th order of *Devas*. There are 12 sub-classes of *Vaimānikas*, each with an Indra. The first and the most important is Saudharmendra of the first and principal heaven Sudharma. He corresponds to the Hindu Devendra and his wife is Śacī. This Saudharmendra is the most important in Jaina iconography, being the one commonly sculptured. He is frequently figured (sometimes with Śacī) on ceilings and on the lower jambs of the doorways of temples. He attends on the Tīrthaṅkaras throughout their career[4]. Sometimes he is associated with flowers[5]. He is always described in Jaina works as anxious not to miss any important event in the lives of the Tīrthaṅkaras and ever desirous of taking the lead in honouring the Tīrthaṅkaras (whether it be just the *Janmābhiṣeka* or the *Kevala-jñāna* or *Samavasaraṇa* stages in the career of the Tīrthaṅkaras). In the light of these remarks I am inclined to take the hurrying Vidyādhara figure with the tray of flowers and "clenched hand"[1] of determination as just standing for our Saudharmendra "ever zealous to participate in honouring the Tīrthaṅkara".

For the same reasons the broken half of this panel on the proper right might have originally shown in a symmetrical order representatives of the human, sub-human, hellish and celestial classes of souls. The spirit of such a rendering is the same as in a *Samavasaraṇa* when the moment the Jina becomes a "Kevalī" Saudharmendra creates the heavenly pavilion called *Samavasaraṇa*. Seated in the *Gandhakuṭī*, within the *Lakṣmīvara-maṇḍapa* which in turn is in the centre of the whole structure, the Tīrthaṅkara holds the divine discourse attended by all pomp. A *divyadhvani* emanates from Him which is interpreted by the *Gaṇadharas*, the occupants of the first *Koṣṭa*, which is one of the 12 *Koṣṭas* surrounding the seat of the Jina, the other 11 *Koṣṭas* containing gods and goddesses, human beings, birds and beasts come to witness the grand scene of the Lord's discourse. The *Gandhakuṭi*, within the *Lakṣmīvara-maṇḍapa* is surrounded by 7 *bhūmis* or regions, each region being encircled by a rampart or *vedikā* or *śālā*. The

4 T. N. Ramachandran, *Tiruparuttikunram*, Pls. VII, XVI, XVII, XIX.
5 *Ibid.*, Pl. XVII.

Bhavyas or the faithful have to pass through these regions before they repair to their respective *Koṣṭas* in the *Lakṣmīvara-maṇḍapa.*

Either the scene represented here is the Jina's *Samavasaraṇa*, or if it protrays any special historical event, it perhaps represents the celebration and re-installation of the *Kaliṅga-Jina*, of which Khāravela was the fortunate author. In the latter case the royal personages may be Khāravela and Kudepasiri or Kudepasiri and the Kumāra (Vaḍukha). Kudepasiri who provided the *leṇa* evidently had this important event carved on the *leṇa's* façade. The flying figure with the tray of flowers may then just be a *Vidyādhara.* But if it is a "Samavasaraṇa" then the flying figure is Saudharmendra who is credited with the formation and organisation of every detail of a *Samavasaraṇa.*

Summary of Paper

A carving of outstanding historical and iconographic importance on the façade of the Jaina cave called locally "Mañcapuri cave' in Khaṇḍagiri-Udayagiri, near Bhuvaneswar in Orissa is identified in this paper as either representing:

1. the *Samavasaraṇa* scene of every Tirthaṅkara arranged by Saudharmendra, or as
2. representing the celebration and re-installation of the Image of Kaliṅga-Jina, by the Kaliṅga King Khāravela of the 2nd-1st century B.C.

In the latter case the royal personages portrayed may be Kharavela and Kudepasiri or Kudepasiri and Kumāra Vaḍukha. The carving dates from at least the 1st. century B.C.

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